

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-19 NIC-01 IO-14 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAJ-01 EB-11 DRC-01 /148 W

----- 041613

R 051836Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9085

INFO USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 17522

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: FRG PRESIDENCY -- BRANDT SAYS HE IS NOT A

CANDIDATE; WAY OPEN FOR SCHEEL

REF: BONN 116917

SUMMARY: BRANDT TOLD THE PRESS DECEMBER 4 THAT HE WILL NOT BE A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY. SCHEEL IS EXPECTED TO ANNOUNCE HIS CANDIDACY SOON. END SUMMARY.

1. IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE BONN GENERAL-ANZEIGER, PUBLISHED DECEMBER 5, BRANDT SAID "I CANNOT BE A CANDIDATE. AS SPD CHAIRMAN, I CANNOT CHANGE DUTIES NOW, BETWEEN PARTY CONGRESSES, AND ESPECIALLY IN THE SITUATION WE ARE IN THIS YEAR. MANY SPD SUPPORTERS, MANY VOTERS AND CITIZENS WOULD CONSIDER THIS DESERTION."

2. IT IS NOW GENERALLY ASSUMED THAT SCHEEL WILL RUN AND
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THAT HE WILL BE SUPPORTED BY THE SPD AS WELL AS THE FDP.

SCHEEL, WHO ENTERS THE HOSPITAL NEXT WEEK FOR ANOTHER KIDNEY OPERATION, IS EXPECTED TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT WHEN RESULTS OF MEDICAL TESTS ARE KNOWN, AND NO LATER THAN AT THE FDP'S TRADITIONAL MEETING IN STUTTGART ON JANUARY 6. THE ELECTION WILL BE IN BONN ON MAY 15.

3. TVF SUCFOF FONMIN SCHEEL'S POSSIBLE MOVE TO BECOME FEDERAL PRESIDENT AROSE AT THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE THREE ALLIED AMBASSADORS WITH FRG FONOFF STATE SECRETARY FRANK DECEMBER 5. FRANK DISCUSSED THIS PROSPECTIVE MOVE AS IF IT WERE ALREADY A FOREGONE CONCLUSION. HE SAID THAT WHILE SCHEEL'S HEALTH PROBLEM MAY HAVE BEEN THE DECIDING FACTOR, THE IDEA OF SCHEEL'S MOVING INTO THIS POSITION HAD BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR SOME TIME. FRANK THEN LAUNCHED INTO A LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF THE SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE OF THIS JOB, THE HIGHEST IN THE GERMAN STATE, AND DESCRIBED SCHEEL'S MOTIVES FOR WANTING IT AS STEMMING FROM HIS DESIRE TO FILL THE POSITION WITH HONOR AND DIGNITY.

4. FRANK SAID IT WAS NOT AT ALL DECIDED AT THIS POINT THAT INTERIOR MINISTER GENSCHER WOULD SUCCEED SCHEEL IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. FRANK THOUGHT THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT BRANDT MIGHT DECIDE TO HOLD BOTH THE CHANCELLOR AND FOREIGN MINISTER POSITIONS, A PRACTICE NOT UNCOMMON IN SOME OTHER WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

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DRC-01 /148 W

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R 051836Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9086
INFO USMISSION BERLIN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 17522

FRANK THOUGHT THE FDP MIGHT BE HARD PRESSED TO ARGUE AGAINST SUCH A PROCEDURE, INASMUCH AS IT WOULD HAVE OBTAINED THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENCY AND HENCE AN IMPORTANT POSITION IT HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY HELD IN THE COALITION.

5. FRANK INDICATED THAT SCHEEL WOULD HAVE THE KIDNEY STONE OPERATION IN MID-DECEMBER, WOULD REMAIN IN THE HOSPITAL FOR SOME THREE WEEKS THEREAFTER, AND WOULD THEN HAVE SEVERAL MORE WEEKS OF RECUPERATION AT HOME. THIS MEANT HE WOULD NOT BE BACK IN THE OFFICE UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY AT THE EARLIEST. BETWEEN MID-DECEMBER AND HIS RETURN, FRANK WOULD BE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AND WOULD HANDLE THE BULK OF SCHEEL'S WORK; STATE SECRETARY APEL WOULD CONCERN HIMSELF WITH THE FRG'S ACTIVITIES VIS-A-VIS THE COMMON MARKET, IN THE POLITICAL AND OTHER SPHERES. THIS LATTER FUNCTION
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WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE IMPORTANT, FRANK NOTED, SINCE THE FRG ASSUMES CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE EC ON JANUARY 1 FOR THE FOLLOWING SIX MONTHS.
HILLENBRAND

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